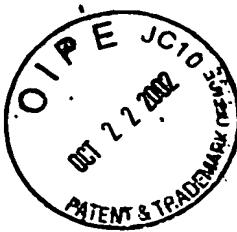


*B1 Cnt*  
*A2 Cnt*

a ratchet plate mountable to an edge of the cutout, the ratchet plate including a front face having a plurality of detents positioned vertically adjacent to each other; and

a pawl mounted to the rail of the sink and including at least one resilient tab to deflectably engage successive detents of the ratchet plate when the sink is inserted downwardly into the cutout and to upwardly seat in one of the detents to retain the sink in a fully inserted position when the flange seats against the countertop.



PATENT  
Attorney Docket No. 205071

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:  
White et al.

Application No. 10/045,572

Art Unit: 3632

Filed: October 23, 2001

Examiner: Le Tan

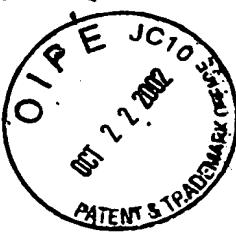
For: RETAINER CLIP FOR  
MOUNTING SINK TO COUNTER  
TOP

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OCT 29 2002  
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AMENDMENTS TO CLAIMS MADE IN  
RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION DATED JULY 17, 2002

*Amendments to existing claims:*

1. (Once Amended) A retainer clip for mounting a flanged sink to a countertop in which the flange seats against the countertop, the retainer clip comprising:  
    a ratchet plate mountable to an edge of the countertop, the ratchet plate including a front face having a plurality of detents; and  
    a pawl mountable to the sink and configured to deflectably engage at least one of the detents of the ratchet plate when the sink is inserted downwardly into the countertop and upwardly seat in said one of the detents to retain the sink in a fully inserted position.
17. (Once Amended) A combination comprising:  
    a sink including a peripheral flange for seating against a countertop and a plurality of rails mounted to an underside of the peripheral flange; and  
    a plurality of retainer clips for mounting the sink within a cutout of a countertop, each of the retainer clips including:  
        a ratchet plate mountable to an edge of the cutout, the ratchet plate including a front face having a plurality of detents positioned vertically adjacent to each other; and  
        a pawl mounted to the rail of the sink and including at least one resilient tab to deflectably engage successive detents of the ratchet plate when the sink is inserted downwardly into the cutout and to upwardly seat in one of the detents to retain the sink in a fully inserted position when the flange seats against the countertop.



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**PENDING CLAIMS AFTER AMENDMENTS  
MADE IN RESPONSE TO OFFICE ACTION DATED JULY 17, 2002**

1. A retainer clip for mounting a flanged sink to a countertop in which the flange seats against the countertop, the retainer clip comprising:

a ratchet plate mountable to an edge of the countertop, the ratchet plate including a front face having a plurality of detents; and

a pawl mountable to the sink and configured to deflectably engage at least one of the detents of the ratchet plate when the sink is inserted downwardly into the countertop and upwardly seat in said one of the detents to retain the sink in a fully inserted position.

2. The retainer clip of claim 1, wherein each of the detents includes a generally horizontal groove on a front face of the ratchet plate, the detents being aligned parallel to each other.

3. The retainer clip of claim 2, wherein each of the detents is a generally V-shaped groove formed by two surfaces disposed at a generally right angle relative to each other.

4. The retainer clip of claim 2, wherein the ratchet plate includes a stop which extends rearwardly from an upper edge of the ratchet plate to seat against an upper surface of the countertop.

5. The retainer clip of claim 1, wherein the pawl includes at least one resilient tab which deflectably engages the ratchet plate.

6. The retainer clip of claim 5, wherein the pawl includes a plurality of resilient tabs, at least some of the tabs having respectively different lengths.

7. The retainer clip of claim 6, wherein a difference in vertical dimension among at least some of the tabs is less than an incremental vertical distance between adjacent detents in the ratchet plate.

8. The retainer clip of claim 6, wherein the pawl is a unitary spring element which includes at least one slot defining a separation between adjacent tabs.

9. The retainer clip of claim 6, wherein the pawl includes: a base portion which is securable relative to the sink; a body portion projecting from the base portion at an upwardly oblique angle in a direction generally outwardly from the sink; and a tip portion opposite the base end, the tip being shaped to complementarily seat in the detents.

10. The retainer clip of claim 9, further comprising a mount assembly adapted to fixedly secure the base portion of the resilient tab relative to a rail of the sink under the sink flange, wherein the mount assembly is adapted to be mounted to a rail extending along an underside of the sink flange, the mount assembly including at least one screw hole, the mount assembly including a screw adapted to extend through the screw hole to secure the base end of the resilient tab relative to the rail.

11. The retainer clip of claim 9, wherein pawl includes a mount assembly adapted to fixedly secure the base portion of the pawl relative to a generally U-shaped channel rail of the sink under the sink flange, the mount assembly including at least one screw having a head shaped to be slidably received within an interior cavity of the channel rail, the screw having a threaded portion projecting outwardly from the interior cavity, the base end of the tab including a hole for receiving the threaded portion of the screw, the mount assembly further including a nut to secure the resilient tab relative to the rail.

12. The retainer clip of claim 12, wherein the screw head is shaped to prevent rotation of the screw relative to the channel rail.

13. A retainer clip for anchoring a flanged sink within a cutout of a countertop, the retainer clip comprising:

a ratchet plate, configured to be mounted to an edge of the countertop within the cutout, the ratchet plate including a front face having a plurality of parallel detents respectively spaced from each other by an incremental distance; and

a pawl adapted to be mounted to the sink, the pawl including a plurality of resilient tabs, each of the tabs configured to deflectably engage the ratchet plate and engage successive detents with a one-way locking action as the pawl moves vertically relative to the ratchet plate;

wherein at least some of the resilient tabs have different respective lengths so that when at least one of the tabs is seated upwardly in a detent, at least one of the other tabs is positioned between detent increments.

14. The retainer clip of claim 13, wherein each of the detents is a generally V-shaped groove formed by two surfaces disposed at a generally right angle relative to each other.

15. The retainer clip of claim 13, wherein the ratchet plate includes a stop which extends rearwardly from an upper edge of the ratchet plate to seat against an upper surface of the countertop.

16. The retainer clip of claim 13, wherein the pawl is unitary and includes: a base portion which is securable relative to the sink; a body portion projecting from the base portion at an upwardly oblique angle in a direction generally outwardly from the sink; and a tip portion opposite the base end, the tip being shaped to complementarily seat in the detents.

17. A combination comprising:

a sink including a peripheral flange for seating against a countertop and a plurality of rails mounted to an underside of the peripheral flange; and

a plurality of retainer clips for mounting the sink within a cutout of a countertop, each of the retainer clips including:

a ratchet plate mountable to an edge of the cutout, the ratchet plate including a front face having a plurality of detents positioned vertically adjacent to each other; and

a pawl mounted to the rail of the sink and including at least one resilient tab to deflectably engage successive detents of the ratchet plate when the sink is inserted downwardly into the cutout and to upwardly seat in one of the detents to retain the sink in a fully inserted position when the flange seats against the countertop.

18. The combination of claim 17, wherein each of the detents includes a generally horizontal groove on a front face of the ratchet plate, the detents being aligned parallel to each other.

19. The combination of claim 18, wherein each of the detents is a generally V-shaped groove.

20. The combination of claim 17, wherein the ratchet plate includes a stop which extends rearwardly from an upper edge of the ratchet plate to seat against an upper surface of the countertop.

21. The combination of claim 17, wherein the pawl includes a plurality of resilient tabs, at least some of the tabs having respectively different lengths.

22. The combination of claim 21, wherein a difference in vertical dimension among at least some of the tabs is less than an incremental vertical distance between adjacent detents in the ratchet plate.

23. The combination of claim 21, wherein the pawl is a unitary member and the plurality of tabs are formed by at least one slot defining a separation between adjacent tabs.

24. The combination of claim 23, wherein the pawl includes: a base portion which is fixed relative to the sink, a body portion projecting from the base portion at an upwardly oblique angle in a direction generally outwardly from the sink; and a tip portion opposite the base end, the tip being shaped to complementarily seat in the detents.

25. The combination of claim 24, wherein the sink includes a rail extending under the flange and further comprising at least one screw securing the base portion of the pawl to the rail.

26. The combination of claim 24, wherein the sink includes a generally U-shaped channel rail extending along an underside of the flange, further comprising at least one screw head shaped disposed within an interior cavity of the channel rail, the screw having a threaded portion projecting outwardly from the interior cavity, a hole extending through the base portion of the pawl and a nut securing the resilient tab relative to the rail.

27. The combination of claim 26, wherein the screw head is shaped to prevent rotation of the screw relative to the channel rail.

28. The combination of claim 26, wherein the channel further includes a pair of opposed ridges which project inwardly along an opening to the interior cavity, the screw head seating against the ridges.